



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH  
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January 12, 2005

**TO:** Washington State Board of Health Members  
**FROM:** Charles Chu, Board Member  
**RE:** **POSSIBLE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP WITH UPN 11 KSTW**

**Background and Summary**

Prior to the September 8 Board meeting, a representative of the broadcast television station KSTW, Channel 11 in Seattle contacted Board staff about a possible public-private partnership. KSTW, which is owned by Viacom and affiliated with the UPN Network, was interested in sponsoring a community service campaign aimed at fighting childhood obesity. I, along with staff members Tara Wolff and Craig McLaughlin, met with station representatives on September 16.

KSTW Local Sales Manager Chris Shuler and Account Executive Melissa Brewer proposed that KSTW would produce three 30-second spots (“vignettes”) aimed at reducing childhood obesity. These would air 120 times across the station’s schedule. The station would also create and distribute a pamphlet and would feature the campaign on its Web site. The station was looking for a public partner with policy expertise to help it develop content for the vignettes and the brochure, and to endorse that content to ensure its credibility. The station said it would seek other sponsors to increase the number of times the messages ran. Its representatives expressed a strong commitment to reducing the numbers of obese and overweight children, but also acknowledged that the station could profit from the campaign by bundling sponsorship with commercial advertising agreements.

We met again on December 2. This time Board Chair Tom Locke and KSTW Director of Sales Michael Seifert joined us. We agreed on a set of first steps and a tentative timeline for continuing to explore this possible partnership. The Board agreed to undertake two tasks at this stage:

1. By December 17, 2004, propose a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to define a comment set of agreements about how the partnership would work.
2. By January 31, 2005, propose a basic outline for the campaign—key messages, tone and presentation, target audience, spokespeople, etc.

Ms. Wolff has assembled a group of partners to advise the Board on the campaign outline. Staff sent the proposed MOU to KSTW on December 17, 2004 (attached). KSTW has not has an opportunity to review and respond fully, so it would be premature to ask the Board to formally approve the document. This would, however, be a good time to ask questions and provide comments. I am also asking the Board to approve this work as an addition to the 2003-05 work plan. The rest of this memo provides additional detail on the proposed partnership and discussions to date.

### **Recommended Board Action**

I recommend the following motion:

***The Board amends the 2003-05 work plan to add exploring a possible public-private partnership with KSTW that would result in a social marketing campaign aimed at promoting good nutrition and increased physical activity for children.***

### **Discussion**

As mentioned above, KSTW contacted the Board to discuss a partnership in September. The station had identified childhood obesity as an important issue, and one that might resonate with potential advertisers. It contacted the Board after reviewing materials on the Board's Web site that had been developed to support the Food, Fitness and Our Kids community forums.

At the September 16 meeting, Melissa Brewer presented a proposal that called for KSTW to produce three 30-second vignettes—essentially social marketing “commercials”—to educate viewers about the obesity epidemic and encourage healthy behaviors. These would run 120 times. The station would also publish and distribute a brochure and feature the obesity campaign on its Web site. At the time, KSTW envisioned that the Subway restaurant chain might be a major sponsor of the campaign. It would pay for the vignettes to run more frequently, be recognized as a sponsor, and potentially purchase other advertising from the station. Other sponsors would also be sought. The station wanted the Board to sponsor or endorse the educational content of the vignettes and the pamphlet. After the meeting, Board staff check with counsel to make sure this kind of activity was within the Board's statutory authority.

At the December 2 meeting, the station explained that Subway was no longer a candidate for sponsorship and that the station would need to find a significant level of sponsorship to justify its investment (estimated at \$72,000). The Board agreed to a limited commitment that would allow the project to move forward. The Board agreed:

1. By December 17, 2004, it would propose a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to define a comment set of agreements about how the partnership would work.
2. By January 31, 2005, it would propose a basic outline for the campaign—key messages, tone and presentation, target audience, spokespeople, etc.

KSTW would then use the basic outline to develop a presentation that could be used to pitch the campaign to potential sponsors during the late winter and spring of 2005.

On December 17, the Board forwarded a proposed MOU to the station for review. The draft MOU provides a detailed, structured explanation of how the proposed partnership might work. Ms. Wolff has tentatively scheduled a meeting with a variety of partners to discuss ways to shape an effective campaign.

Attachment